

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-15 NIC-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 RSR-01 /131 W

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R 280900Z AUG 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8014

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 8605

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJ: INTERNAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY. LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES RAISE THE POSSIBILITY OF A PARTY PLENUM OR, ALTERNATIVELY, CONSULTATIONS BY PROVINCIAL LEADERS. THERE HAS BEEN A MAJOR TURNOUT OF THE PRESENT LEADERS AND SOME OF THE LIKELY CANDIDATES FOR A NEW POLITBURO. IMPORTANT NEW REHABILITATIONS HAVE SURFACED, AND CHOU APPEARS TO HAVE OVERRIDDEN CRITICISM AGAINST SUCH REHABILITATIONS. MEANWHILE, THE HIGH VOLUME OF ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA RAISES A POSSIBILITY THAT THE SOVIET THREAT IS BEING USED IN SOME WAY IN CHINESE POLITICAL INFIGHTING. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PATTERN OF PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP APPEARANCES SUGGESTS THAT A TOP-LEVEL NATIONAL MEETING, POSSIBLY A PARTY PLENUM, WAS IN SESSION IN THE PERIOD AUGUST 20 TO 25. MOST CONSPICUOUSLY, SHENSI CHIEF LI JUI-SHAN DID NOT ATTEND THE WOMEN'S CONGRESS HELD IN HIS PROVINCE AUGUST 20-24, WHILE TIBET CHIEF JEN JUNG WAS
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NOT PRESENT FOR THE OPENING OF TIBET'S TRADE UNION CONGRESS
AUGUST 24. HOWEVER, SINKIANG CHIEF SAIFUDIN WAS ON HAND, ALONG

WITH SINKIANG MILITARY REGION COMMANDER AND PARTY SECOND SECRETARY YANG YUNG, FOR THE AUGUST 26 OPENING OF MASS ORGANIZATION CONGRESSES THERE. AN ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATION FOR THIS PATTERN OF APPEARANCES IS THAT PROVINCIAL LEADERS ARE BEING CALLED TO PEKING ON A SELECTIVE BASIS FOR CONSULTATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE PARTY CONGRESS.

2. IN PEKING, THE OPENING OF THE INTERNATIONAL PING PONG TOURNAMENT AUGUST 25 SAW A FULL TURNOUT OF THE ACTIVE REGIME LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING PRESENT POLITBURO MEMBERS AND SOME LIKELY CANDIDATES FOR A NEW POLITBURO. THE FULL LIST OF PRINCIPALS, AS GIVEN IN NCNA'S SECOND RELEASE READS IN ORDER OF NAMES: TUNG PI-WU, CHU TEH, CHOU EN-LAI, YEH CHIEN-YING, CHIANG CHING, CHANG CHUN-CHIAO, YAO WEN-YUAN, LI HSIEN-NIEN, CHI TENG-KUEI, LI TEH-SHENG, WANG TUNG-HSING, WAN HUNG-WEN, HUA KUO-FENG, WU TEH, CHEN YUN, LI FU-CHUN, TENG HSIAO-PING, HSU HSIANG-CHIEN, NIEH JUNG-CHEN, KUO MO-JO, NGAPO NGAWANG JIGME AND CHOU CHIEN-JEN. PERHAPS SIGNIFICANTLY, THIS SECOND, FULLER RELEASE ON THE TOURNEY'S OPENING MADE BUT ONE CHANGE IN THE EARLIER NCNA RELEASE--IT MOVED YEH AHEAD OF CHIANG CHING. YEH HAS PREVIOUSLY OUTRANKED MADAME MAO ONLY WHEN CHOU WAS OUT OF TOWN, AND THE PLA CHIEF WAS LEFT TO MIND THE STORE.

3. MEANWHILE, TWO MAJOR REHABILITATIONS SURFACED IN NCNA'S ACCOUNT OF PING PONG TOURNAMENT ACTIVITIES AUGUST 26. FORMER VICE PREMIERS AND POLITBURO FIGURES ULANFU AND TAN CHEN-LIN WERE PROMINENTLY LISTED AMONG THOSE PRESENT, BUT WITHOUT TITLES. THIS IS AN EVENT OF POLITICAL IMPORTANCE SECOND ONLY TO THE RETURN OF TENG HSIAO-PING EARLIER THIS YEAR. BOTH ULANFU AND TAN WERE SAVAGELY KNOCKED DOWN IN THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, AND TAN'S CASE BRINGS TO MIND THE MOVE BY PREMIER CHOU TO PROTECT HIM AND OTHERS WITH THE JANUARY 1967 CALL FOR A "REVIVAL OF REPUTATIONS." THIS LED INTO THE "FEBRUARY ADVERSE CURRENT," A SHARP RADICAL ATTACK AIMED INITIALLY AT TAN FOR HIS SWEEPING EFFORT TO "REVIVE THE REPUTATIONS" OF HIS OWN SUBORDINATES IN THE STAFF OFFICE FOR AGRICULTURE.

4. WE THINK IT INESCAPABLE TO CONCLUDE THAT TAN'S REAPPEARANCE,
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AND CHOU'S LONGSTANDING EFFORTS IN HIS BEHALF, FEATURED IN THE AUGUST 7 ATTACK IN PEOPLE'S DAILY ON THE "CONFUCIAN" SLOGAN "REVIVE STATES THAT HAVE BEEN EXTINGUISHED, RESTORE FAMILIES WHOSE LINE OF SUCCESSION HAD BEEN BROKEN, AND CALL TO OFFICE THOSE WHO HAD RETIRED INTO OBSCURITY." (NCNA CARRIED THIS ITEM AUGUST 24) THUS, THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT CHOU IS BEING ATTACKED FOR HIS REHABILITATION POLICY (HONG KONG 8259). HOWEVER, THE SUBSEQUENT FURFACING OF TAN AND ULANFU SUGGEST THAT CHOU HAS OVERRIDDEN HIS CRITICS.

5. IN A POSSIBLE SIDELIGHT ON THE INTERNAL POLITICAL STRUGGLE AT THIS TIME, WE NOTE THE HIGH VOLUME OF CHINESE PROPAGANDA ATTACKS AGAINST THE SOVIETS. THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS ASPECTS OF THIS WILL BE DISCUSSED IN A SEPTEL, BUT WE THINK IT POSSIBLE THAT A RISE IN ANTI-SOVIET DIATRIBES AT THIS TIME HAS SOME RELATIONSHIP TO CHINESE DOMESTIC POLITICS. WE NOTE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT NCNA TOOK THE UNUSUAL STEP OF REPORTING THE OPENING OF SINKIANG'S TRADE UNION AND WOMEN'S CONGRESSES. (NCNA'S CUSTOM HAS BEEN TO REPORT SUCH EVENTS WHEN CONCLUDED.) WE SPECULATE THAT AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IN REPORTING THE EVENT WAS TO DISSEMINATE WIDELY SAIFUDIN'S ATTACK ON THE SOVIETS. BEHIND SUCH STEPS, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT CHARGES OF "PRO-SOVIETISM" ARE BEING USED, OR READIED FOR USE, IN CHINESE POLITICAL INFIGHTING. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT THE LONGTERM SOVIET THREAT IS BEING CITED AS AN IMPLICIT WARNING AGAINST UNRESTRAINED FACTIONALISM, AND AS A RALLYING POINT FOR UNITY.
OSBORN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973HONGK08605
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS OSBORNE
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730811/aaaaaiat.tel
Line Count: 132
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jul-2001 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <31-Aug-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTERNAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS SUMMARY. LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES RAISE THE POSSIBILITY OF A PARTY
TAGS: PINT, CH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005